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ROUGE GOES ROGUE?!

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THIS IS THE VERY RARE EXPENSIVE PRICELESS GEM

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TRANSPORTED BY CHAOS CONTROL ACROSS DIMENSIONS TO STATION SQUARE ON PLANET EARTH, SUPER-FAST SONIC THE HEDGEHOG NOW PROTECTS THE PEOPLE OF EARTH FROM THE PLANS OF THE DIABOLICAL DR. EGGMAN AND HIS MALEFICENT MINIONS!

IT'S MIDNIGHT AT THE STATION SQUARE SPACE MUSEUM, AND THE EXHIBIT OF THE ONE-OF-A-KIND MOON EMERALD HAS DRAWN SOME AFTER-HOURS ATTENTION...

MOON EMERALD

ROUGE GOES ROGUE!

Written by Joe Edkin • Pencilled by David Hutchison • Inked by Terry Austin
Lettered by John Workman • Colored by Josh Ray • Cover by Patrick "Spaz" Spaziante
Editor: Mike Pellerito • Managing Editor: Victor Gorelick • Editor-in-chief: Richard Goldwater
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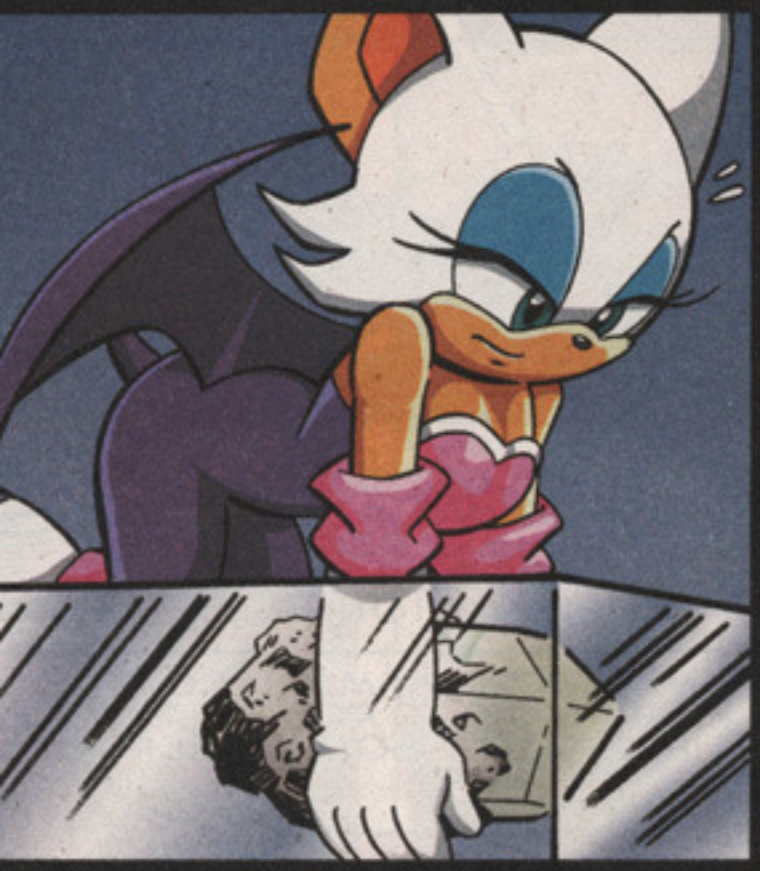
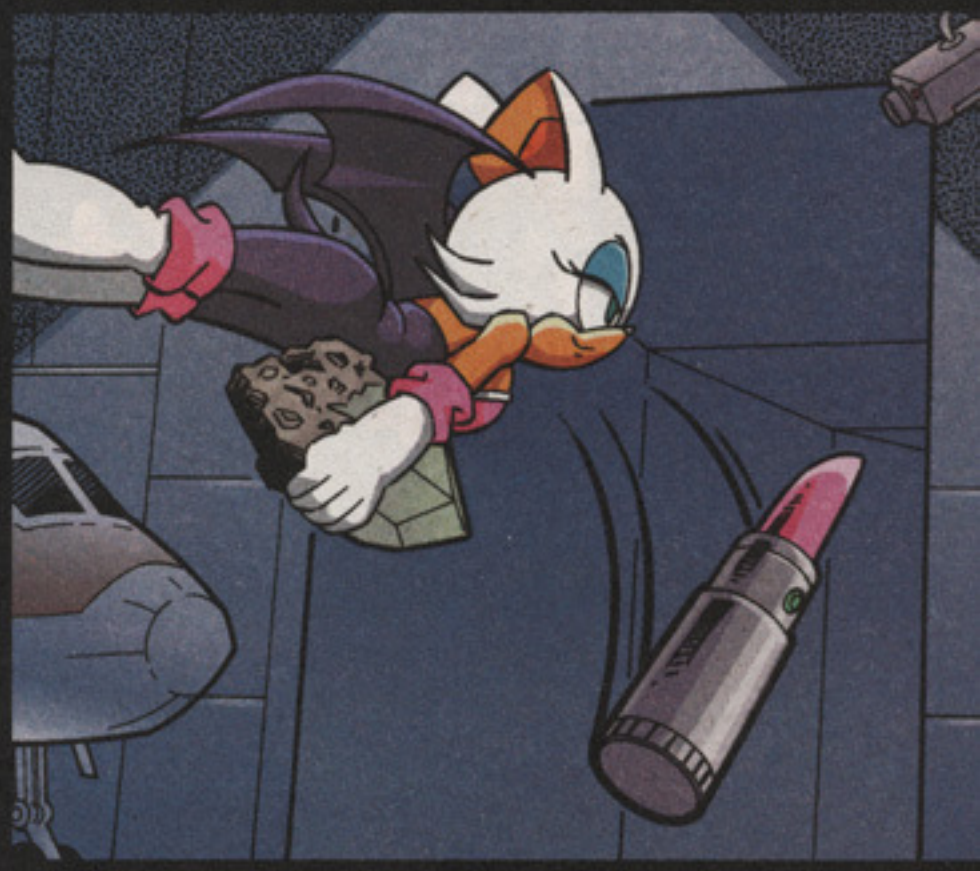
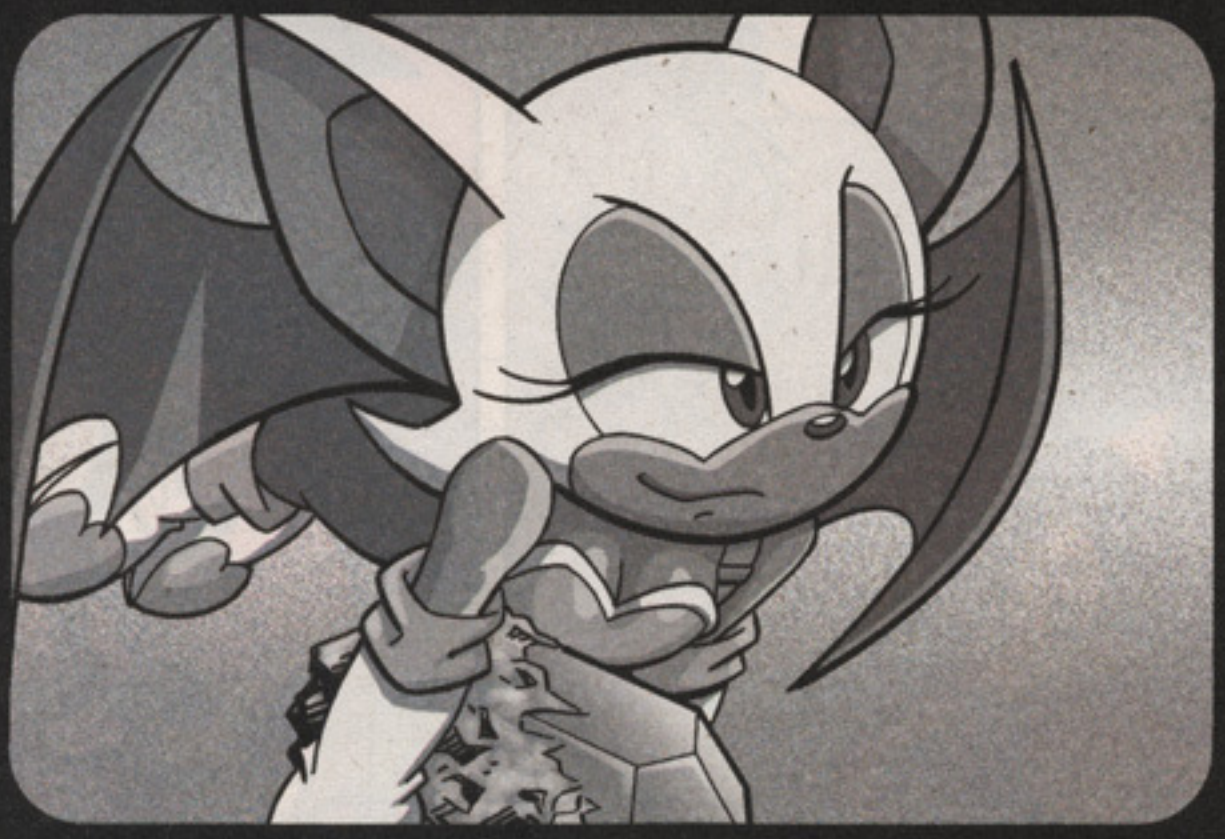
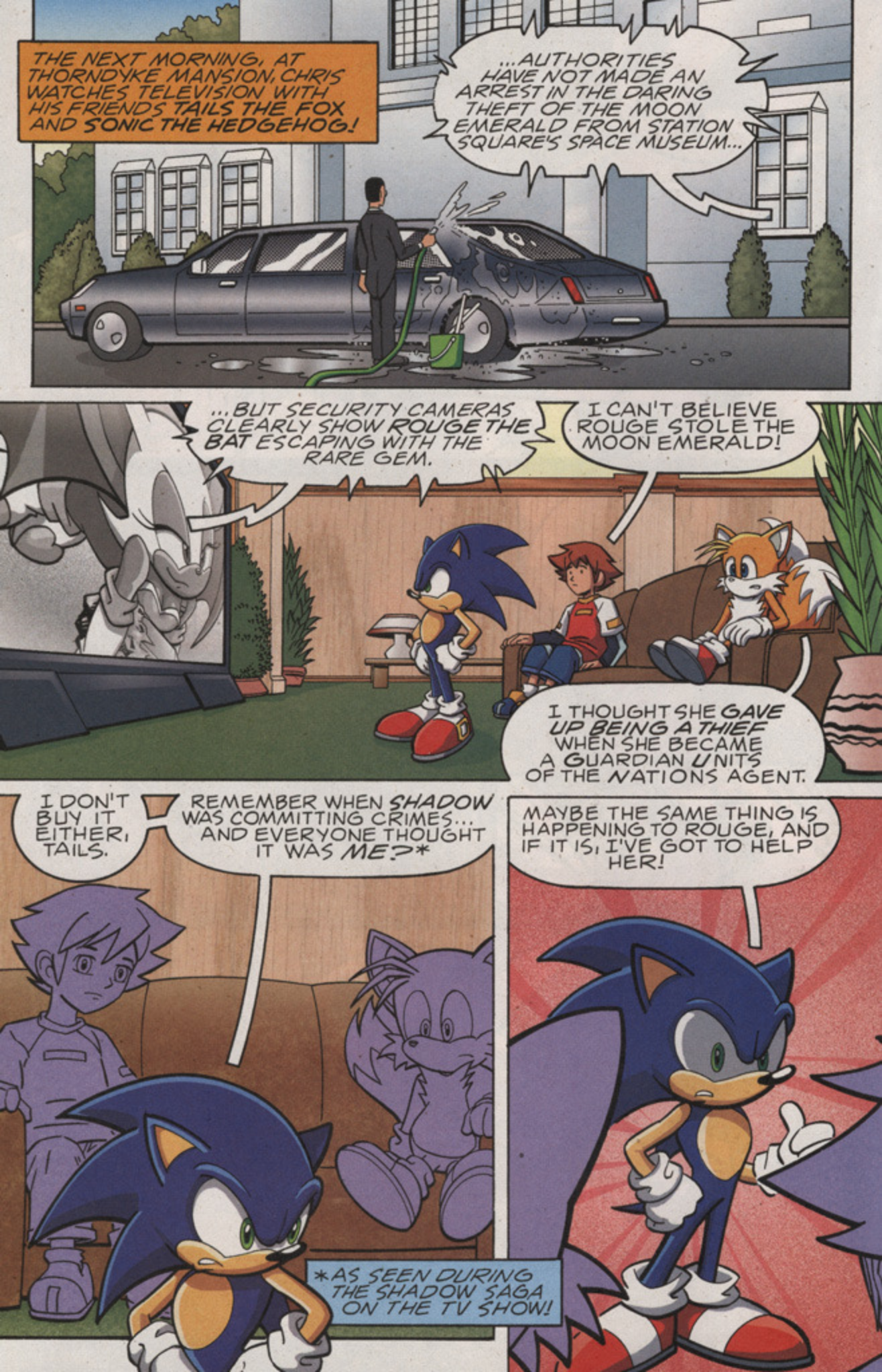
PFFT!
PFFT!

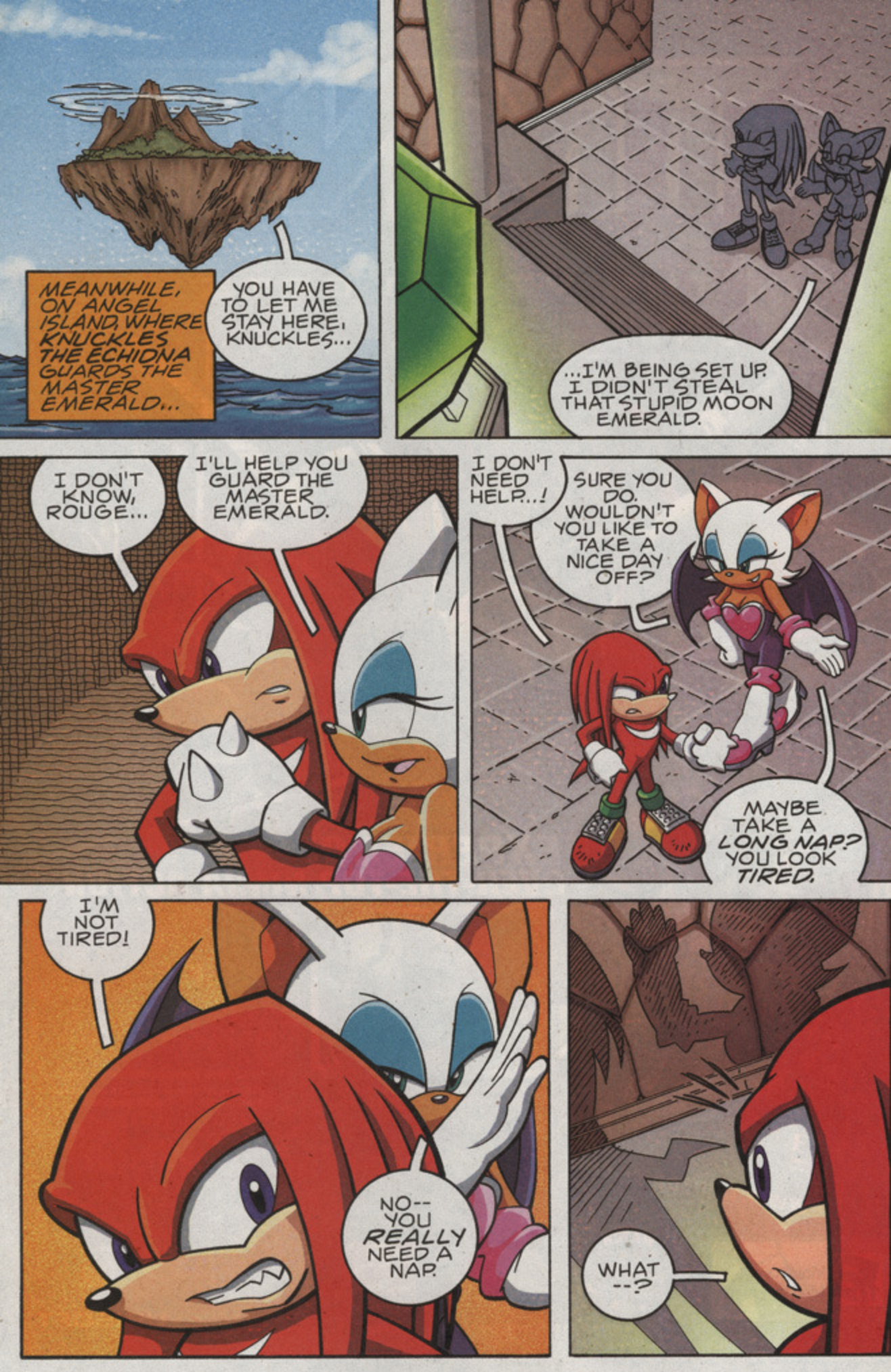







THE NEXT MORNING, AT THORNDYKE MANSION, CHRIS WATCHES TELEVISION WITH HIS FRIENDS TAILS THE FOX AND SONIC THE HEDGEHOG!
...AUTHORITIES HAVE NOT MADE AN ARREST IN THE DARING THEFT OF THE MOON EMERALD FROM STATION SQUARE'S SPACE MUSEUM...
...BUT SECURITY CAMERAS CLEARLY SHOW ROUGE THE BAT ESCAPING WITH THE RARE GEM.
I CAN'T BELIEVE ROUGE STOLE THE MOON EMERALD!
I THOUGHT SHE GAVE UP BEING A THIEF WHEN SHE BECAME A GUARDIAN UNITS OF THE NATIONS AGENT.
I DON'T BUY IT EITHER, TAILS.
REMEMBER WHEN SHADOW WAS COMMITTING CRIMES... AND EVERYONE THOUGHT IT WAS ME?*
MAYBE THE SAME THING IS HAPPENING TO ROUGE, AND IF IT IS, I'VE GOT TO HELP HER!
*AS SEEN DURING THE SHADOW SAGA ON THE TV SHOW!

MEANWHILE, AT THE WHITE HOUSE IN WASHINGTON, D.C....
SECURITY CAMERA FOOTAGE, MR. PRESIDENT. YOU HAVE TO ORDER ROUGE'S IMMEDIATE ARREST.
MISTER PRESIDENT, I DISAGREE WITH CAPTAIN WESTWOOD'S ASSESSMENT. I DON'T BELIEVE ROUGE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE THEFT!
THEN HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS, AGENT TOPAZ?
IT'S A STANDARD ISSUE G.U.N. LIPSTICK LASER, JUST LIKE THE ONE ISSUED TO ROUGE THE BAT.
IT WAS FOUND IN THE MUSEUM.
I'M SORRY, AGENT TOPAZ. I DON'T HAVE ANY CHOICE.
I'M ORDERING YOU TO TAKE ROUGE INTO CUSTODY UNTIL WE CAN SORT THIS WHOLE MESS OUT.
TOPAZ RETURNS TO HER OFFICE TO CARRY OUT HER ORDERS, ONLY TO FIND...
ROUGE?
ROUGE, WHERE ARE YOU?
SHE'S GONE!


MEANWHILE, ON ANGEL ISLAND, WHERE KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA GUARDS THE MASTER EMERALD...
YOU HAVE TO LET ME STAY HERE, KNUCKLES...
...I'M BEING SET UP. I DIDN'T STEAL THAT STUPID MOON EMERALD.
I DON'T KNOW, ROUGE...
I'LL HELP YOU GUARD THE MASTER EMERALD.
I DON'T NEED HELP...!
SURE YOU DO. WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO TAKE A NICE DAY OFF?
MAYBE TAKE A LONG NAP? YOU LOOK TIRED.
I'M NOT TIRED!
NO-- YOU REALLY NEED A NAP.
WHAT --?

I'M SORRY, KNUCKLES...

HEY!

...BUT YOU *REALLY* NEED A NAP!

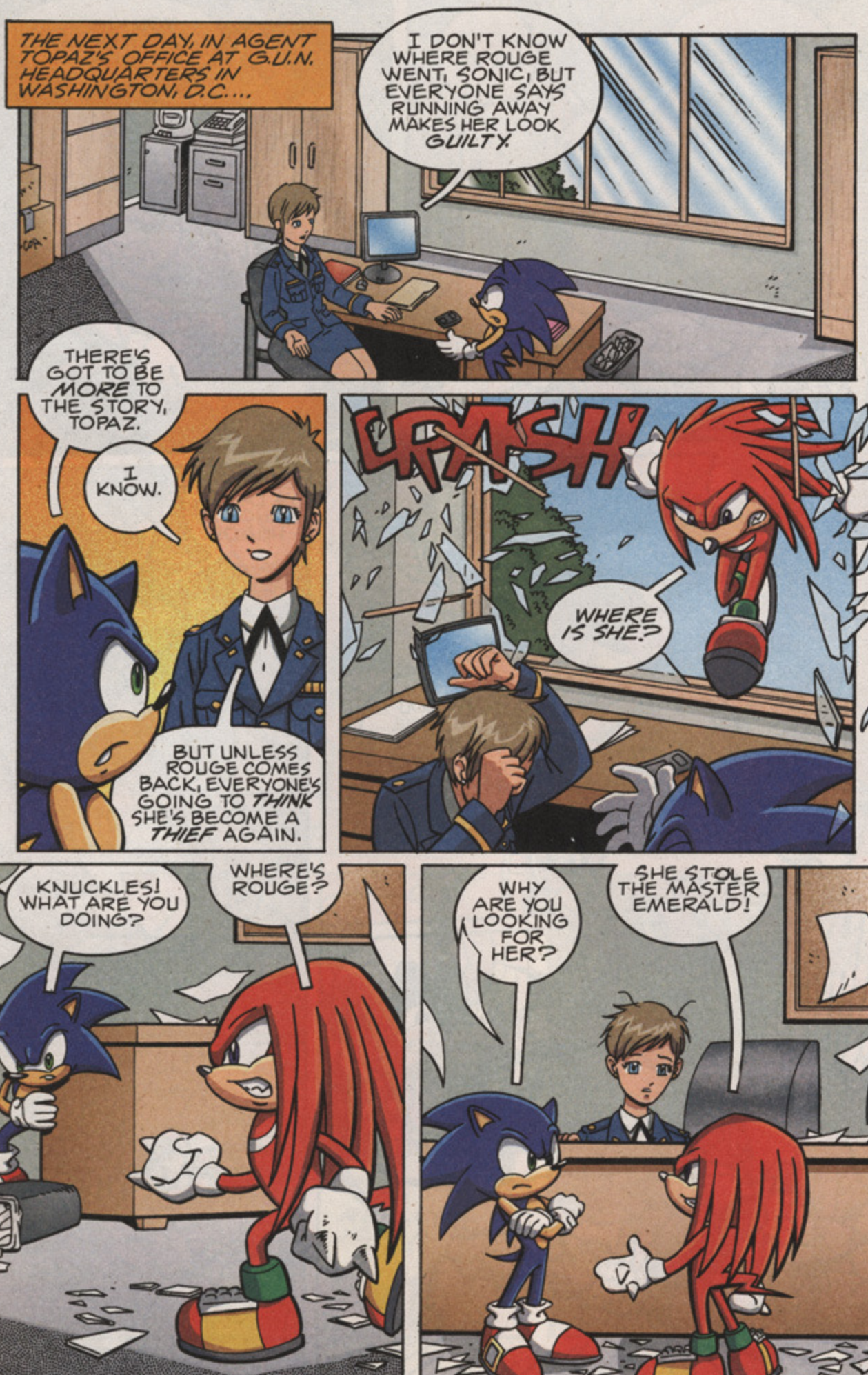
YOU KNOW, I DON'T NORMALLY HIT A LADY...

...BUT *YOU'RE* NO LADY!

YOU HAVE *NO* IDEA!

WHACK

CATCH YA LATER, KNUCKLE-HEAD!


THE NEXT DAY, IN AGENT TOPAZ'S OFFICE AT G.U.N. HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, D.C....
I DON'T KNOW WHERE ROUGE WENT, SONIC, BUT EVERYONE SAYS RUNNING AWAY MAKES HER LOOK GUILTY.
THERE'S GOT TO BE MORE TO THE STORY, TOPAZ.
I KNOW.
BUT UNLESS ROUGE COMES BACK, EVERYONE'S GOING TO THINK SHE'S BECOME A THIEF AGAIN.
KRASH
WHERE IS SHE?
KNUCKLES! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHERE'S ROUGE?
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING FOR HER?
SHE STOLE THE MASTER EMERALD!

REALLY?

DO YOU THINK I CAME CRASHING THROUGH YOUR WINDOW JUST FOR KICKS?

I TOLD YOU ROUGE COULDN'T BE TRUSTED.

NOW THAT WE HAVE AN EYE-WITNESS TO HER CRIMES, WE *HAVE* TO BRING HER IN!

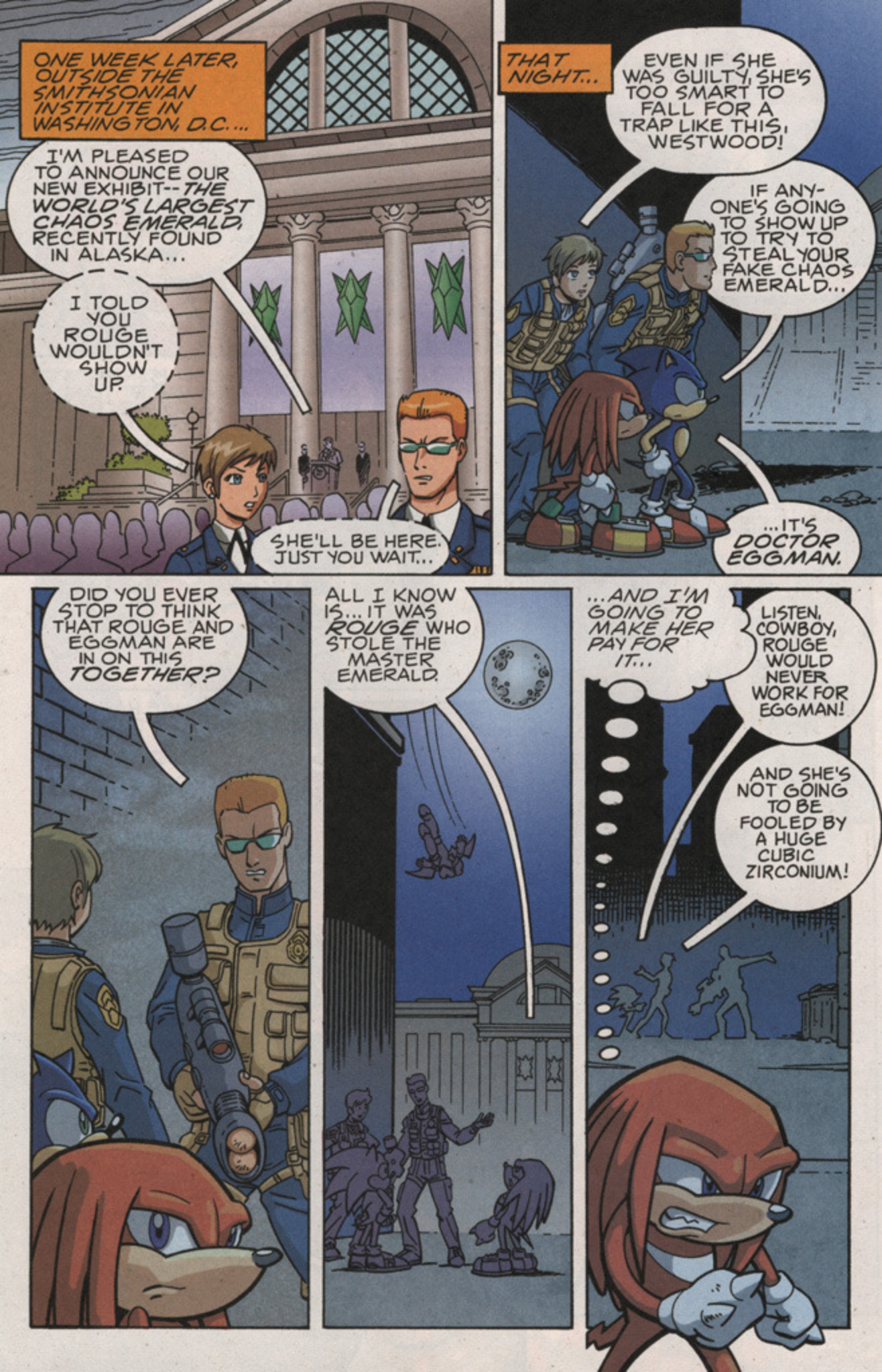
WHAT WE NEED IS A WAY TO DRAW HER OUT OF HIDING SO SHE CAN PROVE HER INNOCENCE.

SONIC'S *RIGHT.*

WE HAVE TO DRAW HER OUT OF HIDING...

...SO THAT WE CAN PROVE SHE'S *GUILTY.*

WHAT WE NEED TO DO IS COME UP WITH A STORY THAT SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO RESIST...


ONE WEEK LATER, OUTSIDE THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE IN WASHINGTON, D.C....
I'M PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE OUR NEW EXHIBIT-- THE WORLD'S LARGEST CHAOS EMERALD, RECENTLY FOUND IN ALASKA...
I TOLD YOU ROUGE WOULDN'T SHOW UP.
SHE'LL BE HERE. JUST YOU WAIT...
THAT NIGHT...
EVEN IF SHE WAS GUILTY, SHE'S TOO SMART TO FALL FOR A TRAP LIKE THIS, WESTWOOD!
IF ANY-ONE'S GOING TO SHOW UP TO TRY TO STEAL YOUR FAKE CHAOS EMERALD...
...IT'S DOCTOR EGGMAN.
DID YOU EVER STOP TO THINK THAT ROUGE AND EGGMAN ARE IN ON THIS TOGETHER?
ALL I KNOW IS... IT WAS ROUGE WHO STOLE THE MASTER EMERALD.
...AND I'M GOING TO MAKE HER PAY FOR IT...
LISTEN, COWBOY, ROUGE WOULD NEVER WORK FOR EGGMAN!
AND SHE'S NOT GOING TO BE FOOLED BY A HUGE CUBIC ZIRCONIUM!

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ALL RIGHT, YOU FLYING RAT! GIVE IT BACK!
ARE YOUR DREADLOCKS WOUND TOO TIGHT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'RE NOT LEAVING HERE UNTIL YOU GIVE BACK THE MASTER EMERALD!
I DON'T HAVE THE MASTER EMERALD!
ARE YOU DENYING THAT YOU KNOCKED ME OUT AND STOLE IT?
SWEETIE, I DON'T HAVE TO KNOCK ANYONE OUT TO GET WHAT I WANT.
SOMEBODY'S PRETENDING TO BE ME!
I'M NOT GOING TO FALL FOR THAT STORY TWICE!
WHERE DID KNUCKLES GO?
LOOK UP THERE!
IT'S ROUGE!

WHAM!
WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!
SHE CAN'T GET AWAY FROM ME NOW!
WAIT!
?
EXCELLENT! THREE FOR THE PRICE OF ONE.
NOT FAR AWAY, HIDDEN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POTOMAC RIVER...
HA! THIS IS GOING EVEN BETTER THAN I'D HOPED!
...THE EVIL DR. EGGMAN IS HATCHING HIS LATEST SCHEME.
WHILE ROUGE, SONIC, KNUCKLES, AND THE HUMAN FIGHT WITH EACH OTHER, IT WILL BE CHILD'S PLAY TO STEAL THE CHAOS EMERALD.

THE TIME HAS COME, MY DEAR...

PRESS

GO GET THE CHAOS EMERALD FOR ME!

YES, MASTER.

BACK AT THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE...

LET US OUT OF THIS!

ONLY IF ROUGE PROMISES NOT TO TRY TO ESCAPE.

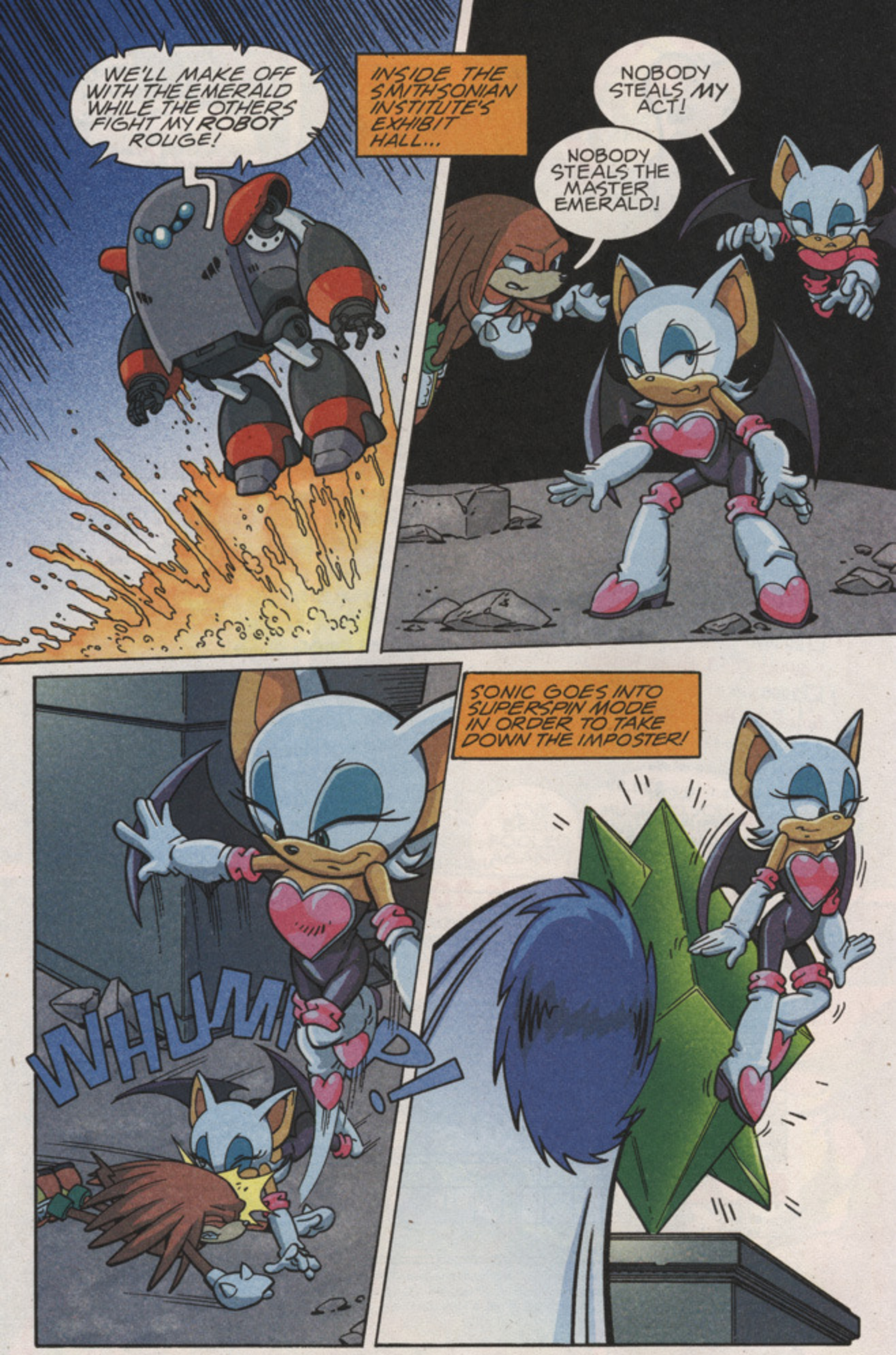
I'M NOT PROMISING *YOU* ANY-THING!

THEN YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE PRISONER TRANSPORT SQUAD ARRIVES.

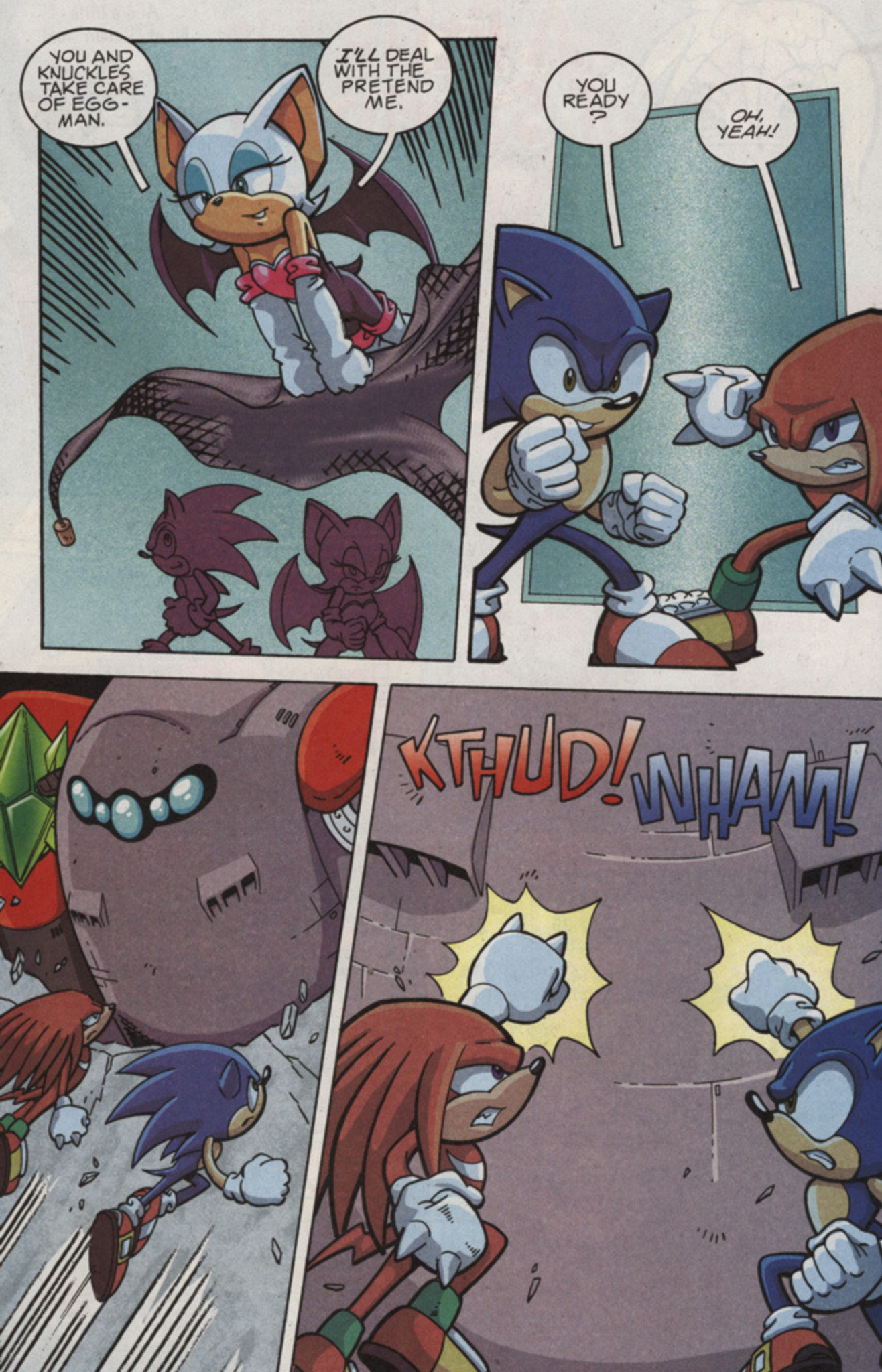
DON'T COUNT ON IT.

I'M GOING TO GET A PROMOTION WHEN I PROVE ALL YOU TALKING ANIMALS ARE PLOTTING AGAINST THE HUMAN RACE!
ZZZZ
ZZZZZ
YOU DIDN'T REALLY THINK A LITTLE OL' NET WOULD STOP ME, DID YOU?
NOW WE CAN GET BACK TO BUSINESS!
GIVE BACK THE MASTER EMERALD!
CRASH!

COUGH COUGH
THIS IS NOT WHAT I'D CALL "A ROCKING GOOD TIME!"
FREEZE, OR I'LL FIRE!
YEAH-- BECAUSE YOU SAW HOW WELL THAT WORKED.
HEY!
WHOA!
I TOLD YOU THERE WAS AN IMPOSTER PRETENDING TO BE ME!
I'VE BEEN FOOLED AGAIN?!
HOW MUCH DO YOU WANNA BET THE EGGMAN'S BEHIND THIS?
LET'S TAKE THIS ROGUE ROUGE DOWN!
HMMMM... IF I WANT THAT CHAOS EMERALD, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE MATTERS INTO MY OWN HANDS!
PREPARE FOR LIFT-OFF!


WE'LL MAKE OFF WITH THE EMERALD WHILE THE OTHERS FIGHT MY ROBOT ROUGE!
INSIDE THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE'S EXHIBIT HALL...
NOBODY STEALS MY ACT!
NOBODY STEALS THE MASTER EMERALD!
WHUMP
SONIC GOES INTO SUPERSPIN MODE IN ORDER TO TAKE DOWN THE IMPOSTER!

WHAM!
NOW I'LL GET THEM!
THUD!
CRASH!
NOT AGAIN!
EGGMAN!
MASTER!


YOU AND KNUCKLES TAKE CARE OF EGG-MAN.
I'LL DEAL WITH THE PRETEND ME.
YOU READY?
OH, YEAH!
KTHUD!
WHAM!

?

BLAST!

BLAST!

YIKES!

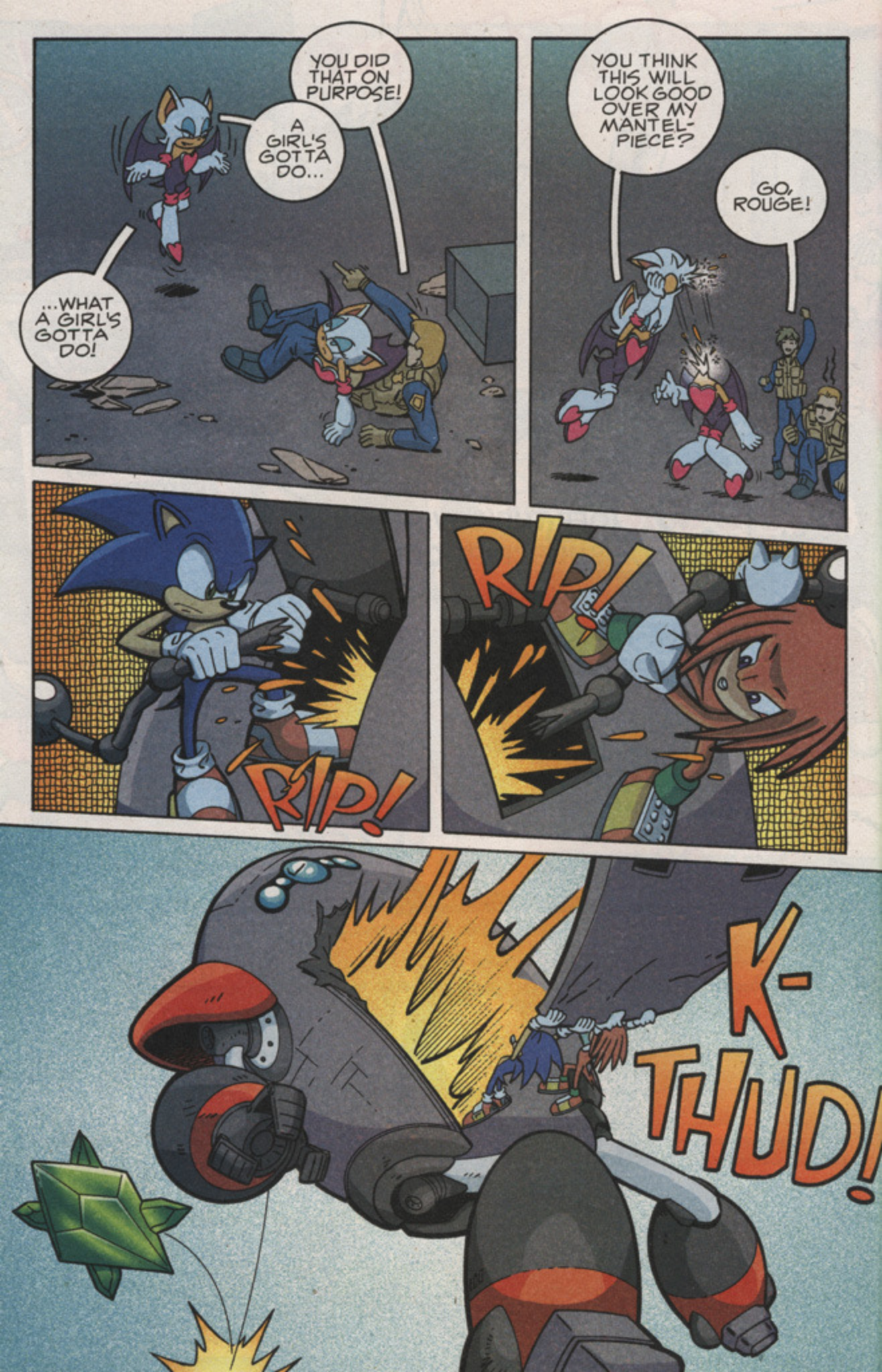
YOW!

THE CHEST PLATE IS HEAVILY ARMED.

I'LL BET EGGMAN'S HIDING SOMETHING IMPORTANT UNDER THERE!

LET'S SMASH IT!

PREPARE FOR A BEAT DOWN, YOU CHEAP KNOCKOFF!
BAM
POW
DON'T FIRE! YOU CAN'T TELL WHICH IS WHICH!
I DON'T CARE! THEY'RE BOTH CRIMINALS, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED!
CLAWK
WHUMP
OOF!


YOU DID THAT ON PURPOSE!
A GIRL'S GOTTA DO...
...WHAT A GIRL'S GOTTA DO!
YOU THINK THIS WILL LOOK GOOD OVER MY MANTEL-PIECE?
GO, ROUGE!
RIP!
RIP!
K-THUD!

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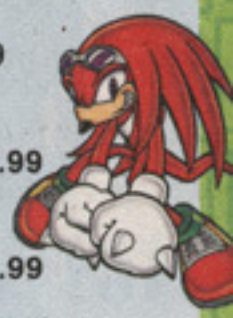

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2361

I THINK *THAT'S* WHAT YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR, KNUCKLES.

YOU MAY HAVE WON *THIS TIME*, SONIC. BUT I'LL BE BACK.

BRING IT ON, EGG-MAN! I'LL BE WAIT-ING!

LATER, IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE...

EGGMAN GOT AWAY, BUT THE MOON EMERALD HAS BEEN RETURNED.

AND WE PROVED IT WAS A ROBOT THAT STOLE IT... NOT ROUGE.

ROUGE, I APOLOGIZE FOR NOT TRUSTING YOU. YOU ARE HEREBY REIN-STATED AS A FULL AGENT...

...OF THE GUARDIAN UNITS OF THE NATIONS.

AND YOU MAY KEEP THE GIANT CHAOS CUBIC ZIRCONIUM...

...AS MY WAY OF SAYING *THANK YOU* FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE FOR US.

END

NEXT ISSUE IS SURE TO BE A WINNER WITH "MUERTA, LAS VEGAS!" LOOK FOR SONIC X #19 ON SALE MAY

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